



How Dogs Think: Understanding the Canine Mind

By Stanley Coren

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How Dogs Think: Understanding the Canine Mind By Stanley Coren

It's been said that dogs personify all the virtues of humans without the vices. Henry James wrote that his dog was "most reasonable and well-mannered" and Plato that "a dog has the soul of a philosopher." Over the years, dogs have taught us many things: loyalty, courage, and to turn around three times before lying down. Yet even in the face of millennia of evidence of thoughtful dogs, there has been little systematic scientific study until recently of what is actually going on in the dog's mind, and some people even question whether dogs have the capacity for that which we call mind. In this long-anticipated new book, written in the vein of his enormously popular "The Intelligence of Dogs" and "How to Speak Dog," Dr. Stanley Coren looks at both the heights of intellect and the depth of our misunderstanding of what goes on in a dog's mind. A bestselling author, psychologist, and world-renowned expert on dog behavior and training, Dr. Coren is always at the forefront of discoveries about dogs. With his ever-entertaining, erudite style, he provides a fascinating picture of the way dogs interpret their world and their owners, how they solve problems, learn, and take in new information. Dr. Coren lets you see through a dog's eyes, hear through his ears, and even sense the world through a dog's nose, giving you the insight that you need to understand the silly, quirky, and apparently irrational behaviors that dogs demonstrate, as well as those stunning flashes of brilliance and creativity that they occasionally display. Along the way, "How Dogs Think" will answer the questions about which you have always wondered, including: Can dogs count? Do they have an appreciation of art or music? Can a dog learn how to do something by just watching another dog or even a person do it? Do dogs dream? What is the nature of dog personality? Which behaviors are prewired into your dog and which can you actually change? And, can dogs sense future earthquakes or detect cancer? With information not widely known to lay people, this lively guide also provides practical advice and wisdom that allows owners to discover the best ways to teach dogs new things, why punishment doesn't work, how a dog can actually learn to love or to fear, and how to turn that new puppy into a "perfect," emotionally sound, inquisitive, happy, and obedient dog. Combining solid science with numerous funny, informative anecdotes and firsthand observations -- all characterized by Dr. Coren's own searching intelligence and his (and sometimes his dogs') irrepressible sense of humor -- "How Dogs Think" shatters many common myths and misconceptions about our four-legged friends.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Friendly, authoritative and firmly grounded in scientific evidence, Coren's survey of canine biology and psychology will give readers a new appreciation of humankind's best animal friend. A psychologist and dog expert, Coren has an amused sort of enthusiasm for all things doggy; he likes both funny stories about pooches and serious research that logically explains their behavior. The combination will be familiar to fans of his previous bestsellers, *The Intelligence of Dogs* and *How to Speak Dog*, and it works just as well in this new volume. Chapters like "I Sniff, Therefore I Am" and "The Wrinkled Mind" teach readers what makes the canine nose so incredibly sensitive, why dogs have special taste buds that are sensitized to water, what's the difference between long and short growls, and why dogs like to sniff people in embarrassing spots. Dogs feel pain in similar ways to humans, Coren explains, but most cases of "dog ESP" or telepathy can be traced to sensitive hearing—or to humans' desire to believe in doggy ESP. In a chapter on genetics, he shows how anxiety disorder can be passed from mom to litter. Other chapters cover breeding and training, and the book concludes with a complex examination of the science and philosophy of canine consciousness. Coren doesn't dumb anything down but manages to make scientific information easy to understand—and he scatters practical tips for handling dogs at home throughout the text. This entertaining, well-researched book will please dog lovers of every stripe.

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From [Booklist](#)

Dogs are the oldest domesticated animal and our most common household pet. With all this time and intimacy, what have we learned about how our closest companion animal thinks? Coren, a professor of psychology and recognized dog expert (*How to Speak Dog* [2000] and *The Intelligence of Dogs* [1995]) examines what is known about how the canine mind works. He investigates the effects of both genetics and learning on the behavior of dogs and the consequences of breeding for specific traits in purebreds and how this has changed their personalities. He is also the host of a weekly Canadian television show on dog behavior, and from this background he enlivens the text with human-dog anecdotes that illustrate his more scientific points. It is this combination of research (backed up with an extensive bibliography) and applicability, brought together with Coren's eminently readable style, that makes for a valuable book. *Nancy Bent*

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From the Inside Flap

"The thinking dog owner's guide to everything they ever wanted to know about their dog. Truths expanded, myths exposed, common sense prevailing, Dr. Coren tells it the way it is. Two dew claws up for this excellent book."

--Nicholas H. Dodman, BVMS, MRCVS, DVA, Professor of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University; author of *The Dog Who Loved Too Much* and *If Only They Could Speak*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Auten:

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